

## 13007, 13019, 13023 and 13107 - 128 Avenue NW

### Position of Administration: Support



Image 1: Aerial view of rezoning area



Image 2: Aerial view of road closure area

**Summary**

Charter Bylaw 20617 proposes a rezoning from the (AJ) Alternative Jurisdiction Zone and (AP) Public Parks Zone to (RA7) Low Rise Apartment Zone and (AP) Public Parks Zone to accommodate multi-unit affordable or supportive housing in the northeast portion of the site, in alignment with City Council's approved Updated Affordable Housing Investment Plan (2019-2022). The proposed RA7 Zone allows for a 16 metre high (approximately 4 storeys) residential building with limited commercial opportunities at ground level such as child care services, general retail stores and specialty food services.

The rezoning from AJ to AP will ensure the majority of the site is used for recreational uses, as well as retain a greenway buffer between the northern property line of the railway parcel (located to the south) and the proposed Multi-unit Housing site.

Bylaw 20616 is an application to close an undeveloped road right of way (131 Street NW), located south of 128 Avenue NW, that accompanies this Charter Bylaw.

Communications and public engagement for this application included a mailed notice, site signage, information on the City's webpage, and an Engaged Edmonton webpage. Approximately 33 people were heard from, with most in opposition. Common concerns were related to the loss of greenspace and impacts related to the development of multi-unit housing including loss of views, privacy, and increased traffic congestion.

Administration supports this application because it:

- Allows for the provision of affordable multi-unit housing.
- Allows for the continued use of open space as parkland in Athlone.
- Diversifies the housing stock while using land and infrastructure efficiently.
- Aligns with The City Plan target of no one in Core Housing Need.

## **Application Details**

This application was submitted by the City of Edmonton, Real Estate Branch.

### **Rezoning**

The proposed RA7 Zone would allow development with the following key characteristics:

- Accommodates multi-unit supportive housing on approximately 0.6 ha of the site.
- Allows for limited commercial uses such as general retail stores, convenience retail stores and professional, financial and office support services; and essential support services (health services) on the ground floor.
- A maximum floor area ratio of 2.3.
- A maximum building height of 16.0 m.

The proposed AP Zone would allow for:

- Two (2) hectares of public land for active and passive recreational uses, such as community recreation services, indoor and outdoor participant recreation services, public parks and special events.
- A maximum building height of 10.0 m.

### **Road Closure**

The proposed road closure will close a portion of the undeveloped 131 Street NW road right of way located south of 128 Avenue NW. Once closed, the road right of way will be consolidated with the adjacent lands.

## Site and Surrounding Area

The site is 2.6 ha and is located at the southern edge of the Athlone neighbourhood. This property was identified by the City of Edmonton for transportation and park uses in 1988 and has acted as a buffer between residential uses (to the north, east and west) and industrial uses to the south.

The proposed site was identified as possible surplus land in 2022 and sent through the internal review process where the Affordable Housing and Homelessness Section identified it as a top candidate for their supportive housing program. The Urban Growth and Open Space Section agreed that a portion of the site was surplus to municipal needs with the condition that the remainder of the site be dedicated as parkland.

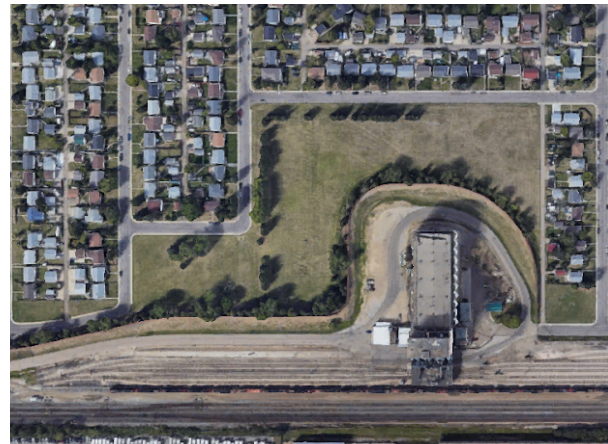
	Existing Zoning	Current Development
<b>Subject Site</b>	(AJ) Alternative Jurisdiction Zone (AP) Public Parks Zone	Vacant Park
<b>North</b>	(RF1) Single Detached Residential Zone (RF3) Small Scale Infill Development Zone	Single detached homes Semi-detached homes
<b>East</b>	(RF1) Single Detached Residential Zone	Single detached homes
<b>South</b>	(AJ) Alternative Jurisdiction Zone (IM) Medium Industrial Zone	Railway right of way Grainary (Hagmann Estates Industrial area)
<b>West</b>	(RF1) Single Detached Residential Zone	Single detached homes



*View of the site looking towards the south from 128 Avenue NW.*



*View of site looking southwest from 130 Street NW.*



*Planview of the site.*

## **Community Insights**

This Land Use Application was brought forward to the public using a broadened approach. This approach was selected because, while there is no neighbourhood plan in effect for Athlone, generally, applications receiving significant interest from the community or changes to existing greenspaces require additional opportunities for discussion and information sharing.

In response to the first notice (July 2023), the notification catchment area was expanded from 60 m to 120 m to inform residents of opportunities to provide additional feedback on the Engaged Edmonton webpage. An error was found on the postcard regarding the misidentification of the start date for the Engaged Edmonton page. It was identified as beginning August 25th to October 9th, 2023 rather than September 25th to October 9th. The end date was correct and given the error did not change the awareness of or ability of residents to access the page during the intended times, no additional changes were made to further correct the information. Those

respondents who were unsure of the engagement dates or were unable to enter comments, and who contacted the file planner, were advised of the error and given the opportunity to provide their comments and questions directly for incorporation into the What We Heard Report contained in Appendix #1.

The broadened approach included:

### **Mailed Notice, July 26, 2023**

- Notification radius: 60 metres
- Recipients: 62
- Responses: 17
  - In opposition: 17 (100%)

### **Mailed Notice, September 14, 2023**

- Notification radius: 120 metres
- Recipients: 127
- Responses: 7
  - In support: 0 (0%)
  - In opposition: 5 (71%)
  - Mixed/Questions only: 2 (29%)

### **Engaged Edmonton Webpage, September 25, 2023 to October 9, 2023**

- Site visits: 283
- Aware: 208
- Informed: 56
- Engaged: 19
  - In support: 2
  - In opposition: 33
  - Mixed/Questions only: 0

### **Site Signage, August 2, 2023**

- Two (2) rezoning information signs were placed on the property with one facing 128 Avenue NW at the northeast corner of the site and the second facing 133 Street NW at the northwest corner of the site.

## Webpage

- [edmonton.ca/rezoningapplications](https://edmonton.ca/rezoningapplications)

## Notified Community Organizations

- Athlone Community League
- One Society Area Council

## Common comments heard:

- The Athlone site is not appropriate for the provision of supportive housing because the site is not close enough in terms of walking distance to public transportation routes or other amenities like grocery stores (27).
- Allowing supportive housing could exacerbate crime in the area and lead to safety concerns especially for children playing in the neighbourhood (18).
- The construction of an apartment building will result in a loss of greenspace and will destroy the natural habitat that local wildlife uses regularly (17).
- The opportunity for public input in the planning process was insufficient (16).
- A 4-storey apartment building will affect views and privacy, and is not keeping with the single family homes in the neighbourhood (9).
- The proposal will increase traffic congestion in the neighbourhood and increase the demand for on-street parking (8).
- The former Wellington School site would be a better location for this project (4).

A full “What We Heard” Public Engagement Report is found in Appendix #1.

## Application Analysis



## The City Plan

This application aligns with The City Plan by encouraging active living and promoting gathering space whereby Edmontonians have the ability to access diverse and affordable housing options in communities that support their daily needs and by improving local open spaces to support density increases.

The application aligns with the Big City Move to be Inclusive and Compassionate by creating an opportunity for permanent affordable housing integrated into a community, close to a park, transit and other amenities, and an area with limited housing diversity. This contributes to The City Plan target of having nobody in core housing need. In addition, the application maintains and protects 2 ha of local green space, ensuring residents can continue to meet their recreational needs locally, and providing direct access to this amenity area.

## Impact of Zoning Bylaw Renewal

At the time of writing of this report, Zoning Bylaw 20001 has been approved but is not yet in effect. As a result, if proposed Charter Bylaw 20617 is approved, the (RA7) Low Rise Apartment Zone and (AP) Public Parks Zone would be effective until December 31, 2023, while the (RM h16.0) Medium Scale Residential Zone and (PSN) Neighbourhood Parks and Services Zone would become effective January 1, 2024.

## Land Use Compatibility

Lands to the north, east and west of the site are developed primarily with single detached housing. The proposed RA7 Zone allows for additional height and density compared to the developed single family homes; however, through mindful site planning, building orientation, setbacks and landscaping requirements, the impacts of the proposed low rise apartment building will be mitigated as much as possible.

The table below compares the existing AJ and AP zones to the proposed RA7 Zone, as well as Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative equivalent (RM) Medium Scale Residential Zone.

	<b>Current AJ Zone</b>	<b>Current AP Zone</b>	<b>Proposed RA7</b>	<b>Proposed ZBR Equivalent RM Zone</b>
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<b>Typical Uses</b>	<b>Lands under federal and provincial jurisdiction</b>	<b>Public park</b>	<b>Multi-unit Housing</b>	<b>Multi-unit Housing</b>
<b>Maximum Height</b>	n/a	10.0 m	16.0 m	16.0 m
<b>Front Setback</b> (128 Ave)	n/a	6.0 m	4.5 m	4.5 m
<b>Minimum Side Setback</b> (alley)	n/a	4.5 m	1.5 - 3.0 m	3.0 m
<b>Minimum Rear Setback</b>	n/a	7.5 m	7.5 m	3.0 m
<b>Minimum Density</b>	n/a	n/a	45 units/ha	45 units/ha
<b>Floor Area Ratio (FAR)</b>	n/a	n/a	2.3	2.3

Depending on the size of the building envelope, approximately 75 to 180 units could be developed on the 0.6 ha proposed RA7 site. The number of multi-unit housing units will be determined at the development permit stage.

According to the 2021 Federal Census, Athlone is predominantly developed with single family dwellings (76%) and has very little multi-unit housing (6%) compared to the City average. The neighbourhood currently has a non-market housing ratio of less than two percent. The addition of multi-unit housing at this location will use land and infrastructure efficiently and diversify available housing stock in the area.

The 2 ha park site will be dedicated as Municipal Reserve (MR), ensuring the land will be maintained for recreation and park uses into the future. There is also a proposed greenway buffer between the northern property line of the existing railway parcel and the proposed RA7 site. This greenway will also enhance the connection to the existing park parcels located along 127 Ave to the east and west.

### *Breathe*

An analysis was conducted by Urban Growth and Open Space Planning on existing open space in Athlone and the anticipated impacts of this proposal. According to *Breathe*, the provision of open space is considered under four functional categories:

- **Distribution:** The arrangement of, and access to, open spaces across the landscape.
- **Quality:** The functionality of an open space, considering the condition of its infrastructure/ amenities and the value of the functions it provides.
- **Diversity:** The range of different open space types and functions within the landscape.
- **Supply:** The physical amount of open space.

With respect to supply, which is the only aspect of the open space that is changing, Athlone has approximately 19.43 ha of land classified specifically as "Municipal Parks," which is 6.16 ha/1,000 people. This application proposes to remove 0.6 ha of parkland, which reduces the supply of land to 5.97 ha/1,000 people. This amount is still above the target of 2.0 ha/1,000 people for new neighbourhoods described in the *Urban Parks Management Plan* guidelines.

Breathe analysis considers all types of Open Space within the neighbourhood, and can also consider land within a 400 m walking radius. This expanded metric results in a total of 27.3 ha of Open Space accessible to the residents of the community, approximately 8.65 ha/1,000 people. Accounting for the loss of the surplus site, there would be a slight drop to 8.46 ha/1,000 people available for community use.

Along with supply, the quality, diversity, and distribution of parkland in Athlone was also considered. Although there is a loss of land, this land contained no park amenities. The area is largely vacant, and the loss of the area is not expected to impact the overall use and enjoyment of the park site.

### **Mobility**

The land identified within this application has not yet been developed and closing this road right of way will provide opportunities to facilitate a larger parcel for supportive housing. The proposed rezoning is not anticipated to have a significant impact on the roadway network. The neighbourhood consists of a grid network providing options to connect to the surrounding roadway network. Upon development, the owner will be required to:

- Create a pedestrian connection along 128 Avenue at DP stage.
- Provide signage and pavement marking for the existing neighbourhood bike route along 128 Avenue NW.
- Upgrade the existing alley to the east of this site to a commercial alley standard.

Edmonton Transit Service operates bus service within walking distance of the site on 127 Street NW with stops within approximately 500 metres walking distance.

## **Open Space**

The proposed rezoning from AJ to RA7 will allow for the development of a supportive housing program. The future RA7 Zone site has been deemed surplus to municipal requirements and will not be required as a park and open space.

The proposed rezoning from AJ to AP will provide for public land for active and passive recreational uses. The AP Zone will ensure continued use of the site as a park space for the neighbourhood. The AP Zone will be designated as Municipal Reserve during the subdivision application.

A 1.8m concrete sidewalk will be constructed within the park site south of 128 Avenue NW and that connects the future RA7 site and park site. The 1.8 metre concrete sidewalk will be a condition of subdivision application.

The road closure area of 131 Street NW located south of 128 Avenue NW will be incorporated into the RA7 Zone and AP Zone.

## **Risk**

A grain elevator is located south of the site, and while there are no concerns for the proposed rezoning, a risk assessment is being prepared that will provide guidelines for future development. These guidelines will be implemented at the subdivision stage.

## **Utilities**

The proposal is not anticipated to have a significant impact on the existing sanitary and storm sewer systems in the area. The applicant / owner will be responsible for all costs associated with infrastructure improvements (construction of new storm and sanitary services) required by this application.

Development allowed under the proposed zone would be required to include on-site stormwater management techniques using a controlled outflow rate to mitigate its impact on the existing storm drainage infrastructure. Details of the required stormwater management will be reviewed at the Development Permit stage.

EPCOR Water indicated that there is a significant deficiency in fire hydrant spacing adjacent to the site. The maximum allowable spacing between fire hydrants is 90 m, whereas the hydrant spacing for the site is approximately 238 m adjacent to 128 Avenue NW, with no hydrants adjacent to 127 Avenue NW. This does not meet the municipal hydrant spacing requirement, however, hydraulic modelling information provided by EPCOR Water has indicated that the nearest hydrants have sufficient residual pressure to supply approximately 185 L/s for firefighting at this site. These factors will be considered in more detail with EFRS at the Development Permit stage.

Edmonton Fire Rescue Services has conducted a risk-based Infill Fire Protection Assessment (IFPA), which could potentially be re-evaluated at the development permit stage. The applicant/owner will be responsible for all costs associated with providing required water supply including any changes to the existing water infrastructure required by the proposed zoning.

## **Appendices**

1. "What We Heard" Public Engagement Report
2. Context Plan Map

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Approved By: Tim Ford

Branch: Development Services

Section: Planning Coordination

# What We Heard Report

## Athlone

### LDA23-0160

Edmonton

## Public Engagement Feedback Summary

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<b>Project Address:</b>	13007, 13019, 13023 and 13107 - 128 Avenue NW
<b>Project Description:</b>	To allow for low rise multi-unit supportive housing and close road right-of-way (131 Street NW) in the southern portion of the Athlone neighbourhood.
<b>Engagement Format:</b>	Online Engagement Webpage - Engaged Edmonton: <a href="https://engaged.edmonton.ca/AthloneRezoning">https://engaged.edmonton.ca/AthloneRezoning</a>
<b>Engagement Dates:</b>	September 25, 2023 and October 9, 2023
<b>Number Of Visitors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engaged: 208</li><li>• Informed: 56</li><li>• Aware: 19</li></ul> <p>See "Web Page Visitor Definitions" at the end of this report for explanations of the above categories.</p>

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### About This Report

The information in this report includes summarized feedback received between July 26, 2023 and October 13, 2023 through online engagement, the Engaged Edmonton platform between September 25, 2023 and October 9, 2023 and emails submitted directly to the file planner.

The public feedback received will be considered during the planning analysis to ensure the review of the application takes local context into consideration and is as complete as possible. It will also be used to inform conversations with the applicant about potential revisions to the proposal to address concerns or opportunities raised.

This report is shared with all web page visitors who provided their email address for updates on this file. This summary will also be shared with the applicant and the Ward Councilor, and will be an Appendix to the Council Report should the application proceed to a Public Hearing.

The planning analysis, and how feedback informed that analysis, will be summarized in the City's report to City Council if the proposed rezoning goes to a future City Council Public Hearing for a decision. The City's

report and finalized version of the applicant's proposal will be posted for public viewing on the City's public hearing agenda approximately three (3) weeks prior to a scheduled public hearing for the file.

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## Engagement Format

The Engaged Edmonton webpage included an overview of the application, information on the development and rezoning process and contact information for the file planner. Two participation tools were available for participants: one to ask questions and one to leave feedback.

The comments are summarized by the main themes below, with the number of times a similar comment was made by participants recorded in brackets following that comment. The questions asked and their answers are also included in this report.

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## Feedback Summary

This section summarizes the main themes collected from the initial application notice sent in July 2023 and the online engagement period.

Number of Responses:

In Support: 2

In Opposition: 33

Mixed: 0

The most common **concerns** heard were:

**Crime:** The proposal will exacerbate existing crime in the neighbourhood.

**Consultation:** The community was not sufficiently engaged and informed about this proposal. Residents without computers may not have been able to provide their comments.

**Location:** Athlone is not a good choice for this project because it is not close enough to key amenities and public transportation.

**Loss of Greenspace:** Several comments indicated that the proposal will result in a significant loss of green space. The site is also home to a variety of wild animals, which will be negatively impacted.

**Building Size:** A 4-storey apartment building is out of scale with the rest of the neighbourhood and will result in a loss of privacy and views, and represents a significant transition from the abutting single detached homes.

**Traffic/Parking:** The area already experiences heavy congestion, especially around the school site. The proposal does not mention how much parking will be provided or how many units will be built, nor how many new residents will have preschool children in need of day care services.. These additional visitors may also increase demand for the limited on-street parking which is already in short supply.

The comments of **support** heard were:

**Parkland Retention:** The majority of the site will be used for park space. It would be great if it could accommodate a community garden as well.

**Housing Diversity:** The project will add to housing diversity in the neighbourhood. The provision of supportive housing is critical.

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## What We Heard

The following section includes a summary of collected comments with the number of times a comment was recorded in brackets (comments received once do not have a number).

### Reasons For Opposition

#### Crime/Safety

- Increased crime (14)
- Concern for childrens' safety (4)

#### Consultation

- Insufficient consultation (14)
- it seem as if the City is trying to push the project through to Council (2)

#### Location

- Athlone is not a good location for supportive housing (13)
- It seems the north side of Edmonton and mature neighbourhoods are disproportionately chosen for affordable housing developments (10)
- The Wellington School site would be a better alternative site option for the project (4)

#### Greenspace

- The proposal will result in a reduction in park space (11)
- It will destroy the natural habitat that local wildlife uses regularly (6)

#### Built Form/Neighbourhood Character

- The site should be developed with single family homes like the rest of the neighbourhood (2)
- The 4-storey building will cast big shadows and will affect the privacy of my property (7)
- The proposal will add too much additional population density (2)

#### Traffic/Parking

- Will increase traffic congestion in the neighbourhood (6)
- Will increase demand for on-street parking (2)

#### Property values

- The project will result in a decrease in my property values (4)

#### Other

- Disruption during construction period (2)
- The proposal will result in low quality development (1)
- Housing so near to the granary should not be allowed (2)
- The project will ruin the mature trees on the site (2)
- The site does not have sufficient sewer capacity (1)
- Will cover the site in too much concrete (1)

### Reasons For Support

- Supportive Housing is important (1)
- The site will largely be retained as park space (1)

### Suggestions For Improvement

- The Wellington School site is a better site for the project (2)
  - The Wellington School site is a better site for the project (2)
  - The park space should include a community garden (1)
  - Use the 24% vacant buildings downtown for supportive housing (1)
  - Keep the park area as a naturalized greenspace (1)
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## Questions & Answers

### 1. What exactly is “Supportive Housing”?

Supportive housing is a type of affordable housing that combines below-market rents with on-site support services tailored to the health and social needs of its residents. It provides long-term stable housing for people who may have experienced homelessness, domestic violence or other circumstances which make it difficult to maintain conventional housing.

Supportive housing is typically owned and operated by dedicated non-profit organizations, with the City playing a key role in turning projects into reality. By providing serviced land at low or no cost, as well as construction grants, the City helps housing partners direct their resources where they are needed most: supporting vulnerable Edmontonians.

### 2. Which properties received notification letters? Were they sent to owners or renters?

Notification letters are sent to property owners within the catchment area. The first notice on July 26, 2023 was sent to 62 owners within 60 metres of the site, and the engagement letter on September 14, 2023 was expanded to include 127 owners within 120 metres of the site.

### 3. Will there be in-person consultation?

The decision to use the Engaged Edmonton engagement tool was made in order to provide a forum to voice concerns either privately or publicly and to reach out to as many concerned residents as possible. Those residents without access to the internet were able to provide their comments by telephone or letter response.

### 4. How can an apartment building be built beside a grainary?

The proximity to the grain elevator is being evaluated in a risk assessment which will advise on any setback requirements, which are generally 35m.

### 5. Why is affordable housing disproportionately being located in older neighbourhoods and on the northside of Edmonton?

The City has helped create more than 2700 new units of affordable housing in more than 30 neighbourhoods since 2019. The City has a goal to create 16% affordable housing in every neighbourhood in Edmonton. As of 2018, fewer than 1% of Athlone's housing units were non-market affordable housing.

### 6. Why is there no visible road where the road closure application is proposed?

The 131 Street road right-of-way proposing to be closed was not built as a road, and as such would not be seen in person or on Google maps. However, it still exists as a legal road-right-of-way, rather than a titled lot, and therefore needs to be closed by-law in order to become a titled lot. The existing (built) alley is not being closed.

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## Web Page Visitor Definitions

Aware



An aware visitor, or a visitor that we consider to be 'aware', has made one single visit to the page, but not clicked any further than the main page.

### Informed

An informed visitor has taken the 'next step' from being aware and clicked on something. We now consider the visitor to be informed about the project. This is done because a click suggests interest in the project.

### Engaged

Every visitor that contributes on the page, either by asking questions or leaving a comment, is considered to be 'engaged'.

Engaged and informed are subsets of aware. That means that every engaged visitor is also always informed AND aware. In other words, a visitor cannot be engaged without also being informed AND aware. At the same time, an informed visitor is also always aware.

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### **Next Steps**

The public feedback received will be considered during the planning analysis and will be included in the administration report for City Council. The administration report and finalized version of the applicant's proposal will be posted for public viewing on the [City's public hearing agenda](#) website approximately three (3) weeks prior to a scheduled public hearing for the file.

When the applicant is ready to take the application to Council (the Administration makes a recommendation of Support or Non-Support):

- Notice of Public Hearing date will be sent to surrounding property owners and applicable nearby Community Leagues and Business Associations.
- Once the Council Public Hearing Agenda is posted online, members of the public may register to speak at Council by completing the form at [edmonton.ca/meetings](http://edmonton.ca/meetings) or calling the Office of the City Clerk at 780-496-8178.
- Members of the public may listen to the Public hearing on-line via [edmonton.ca/meetings](http://edmonton.ca/meetings).
- Members of the public can submit written comments to the City Clerk ([city.clerk@edmonton.ca](mailto:city.clerk@edmonton.ca)).

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If you have questions about this application please contact:

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